

TO2015



For Immediate Release

TO2015 breaks ground on Welland Pan Am Flatwater Centre

World-class facility to host canoe and kayak sprints during TORONTO 2015 Games

WELLAND, ON October 26, 2012 – Ripples of excitement spread across the “Old Canal” today as construction officially started at the Welland International Flatwater Centre to transform it into a premier venue for the TORONTO 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games.

Known at Games time as the Welland Pan Am Flatwater Centre, the facility will reopen in 2013—two years before the historic canal city on the Niagara Peninsula hosts canoe and kayak sprints during the Pan Am Games. The upgrades and improvements are jointly funded by the Government of Canada and the City of Welland.

“With these improvements, the flatwater centre is capitalizing on its strengths and propelling the city into the international spotlight as a top-notch competition venue,” said Ian Troop, Chief Executive Officer of the Toronto 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games Organizing Committee (TO2015).

“In the last month, we’ve broken ground on three TORONTO 2015 Games venues. With just under a thousand days to go until the Games, I’m proud to say we are on track and on budget with our construction starts,” he added.

The facility in Welland boasts almost eight kilometres of deep, placid water, making it an ideal spot for hosting fast-paced paddling sports. In fact, the name Welland comes from a Celtic word meaning “good river.”

For the Games, a section of the canal will be widened to accommodate additional lane space to meet international competition standards. Two new buildings will also be built, including a four-storey timing tower and a 1,066 sq. metre athlete centre with locker rooms, washrooms, medical area and equipment storage. A large outdoor plaza, start towers and permanent seating for 500 spectators will also be added.

“This is a great day for Welland and all of Niagara,” said the Honourable Rob Nicholson, P.C., Q.C., Member of Parliament for Niagara Falls, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada.

“Through Economic Action Plan 2012, the Harper Government is helping the region develop its reputation as an international destination for sport tourism by providing opportunities for high-performance athletes to come here to train and compete for years to come.”

The Province of Ontario is supporting short-term facility improvements, equipment and the overall operations for the 2015 Games, including the kayak and canoe events held in Welland.

“The McGuinty government’s support for the ‘People’s Games’ will benefit the entire community of Welland,” said Charles Sousa, Ontario’s Minister responsible for the 2015 Pan Am /Parapan Am Games. “The Welland International Flatwater Centre will be a great training venue for athletes of

all ages and abilities. It will also be an important facility to attract international competitions that will bring more visitors to the Niagara Region.”

In August 2012, Welland hosted the first International Swimming Federation (FINA) World Junior Open Water Swimming Championships.

In 2013, the centre will add to its roster of world-class events when it hosts the International Canoe Federation (ICF) Junior and U23 Canoe Sprint World Championships, followed by the International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF) World Championships in 2015. The dragon boat competition is the first time Canada will play host to an international competition for the popular sport.

“It’s very exciting to finally see shovels in the ground alongside our Recreational Waterway,” said Barry Sharpe, Mayor of Welland. “This summer we had a wonderful experience hosting our first international championship, and I know we’ll be at the top of our game when the TORONTO 2015 Pan Am Games take place. We can hardly wait to welcome athletes and fans from across the world to Welland and to the Niagara Region.”

In October 2011, the City of Welland awarded the construction and design contract to Rounthwaite, Dick and Hadley Architects through a public tendering process. Last month, the City awarded the general contractor services contract for the project to Elite Construction Inc.

The overall project costs for the facility are estimated \$10 million, which includes \$7.3 million for the construction contract awarded to Elite Construction Inc. The remainder includes capital expenditures for design, equipment, project management and other ancillary costs. The project is on budget and construction is underway.

Last spring, TO2015 announced the cluster and sport program for the TORONTO 2015 Pan Am Games. At that time, it also announced details of the budget for both Games. TO2015 will issue quarterly budget updates starting this fall.

About the TORONTO 2015 Pan American/Parapan American Games

The Pan American and Parapan American Games are one of the world’s largest international multi-sport events, held every four years for athletes of the 41 member nations of the Pan American Sports Organization (PASO) and 26 member nations of the Americas Paralympic Committee (APC). The Pan American Games are comprised of all Olympic Summer Games sports, as well as traditional Pan American sports, while the Parapan American Games are comprised of the majority of Paralympic Summer Games sports. The TORONTO 2015 Pan American/Parapan American Games will draw more than 10,000 athletes, coaches and team officials and feature 51 sports in municipalities across the Greater Golden Horseshoe area. The TORONTO 2015 Pan American Games will take place July 10–26 and the Parapan American Games August 7–14. For more information about the Games, please visit TORONTO2015.org.

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